

# *Sri Krishna Kathamrita*



## *Bindu*

Issue 589

**The Devotional Genius of Srila Jayadev Goswami**





# Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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## Highlights

- **SRILA JAYADEV GOSWAMI**

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

- **THE SERVICE OF SRI RADHA**

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

- **RADHARANI'S WEALTH**

*Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

- **BASOHLI PAINTINGS AND THE ARTIST MANAKU**

- **THE LEGACY OF JAYADEV GOSWAMI**

- **THE TOLERANCE AND COMPASSION OF JAYADEV GOSWAMI**



## SRILA JAYADEV GOSWAMI

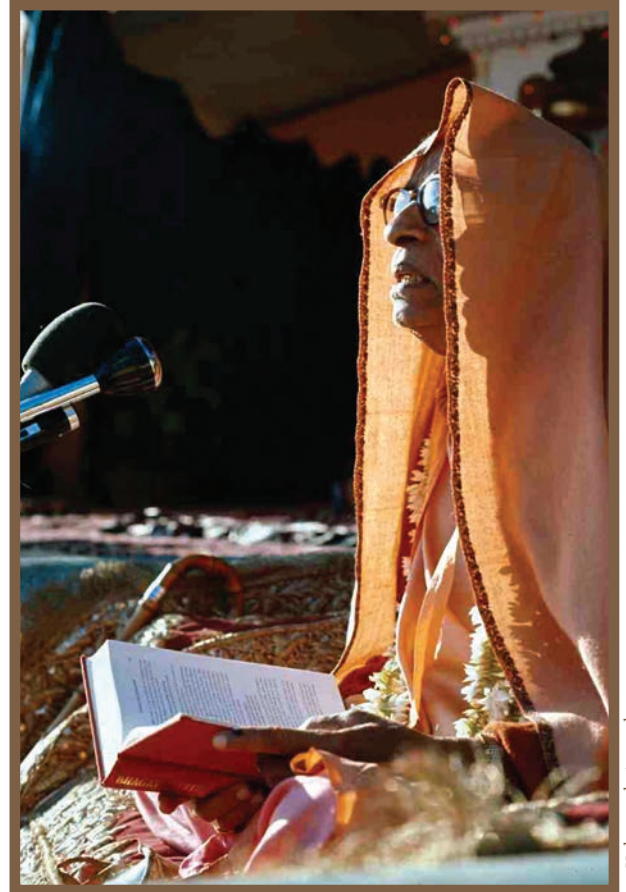


*His Divine Grace*

*A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

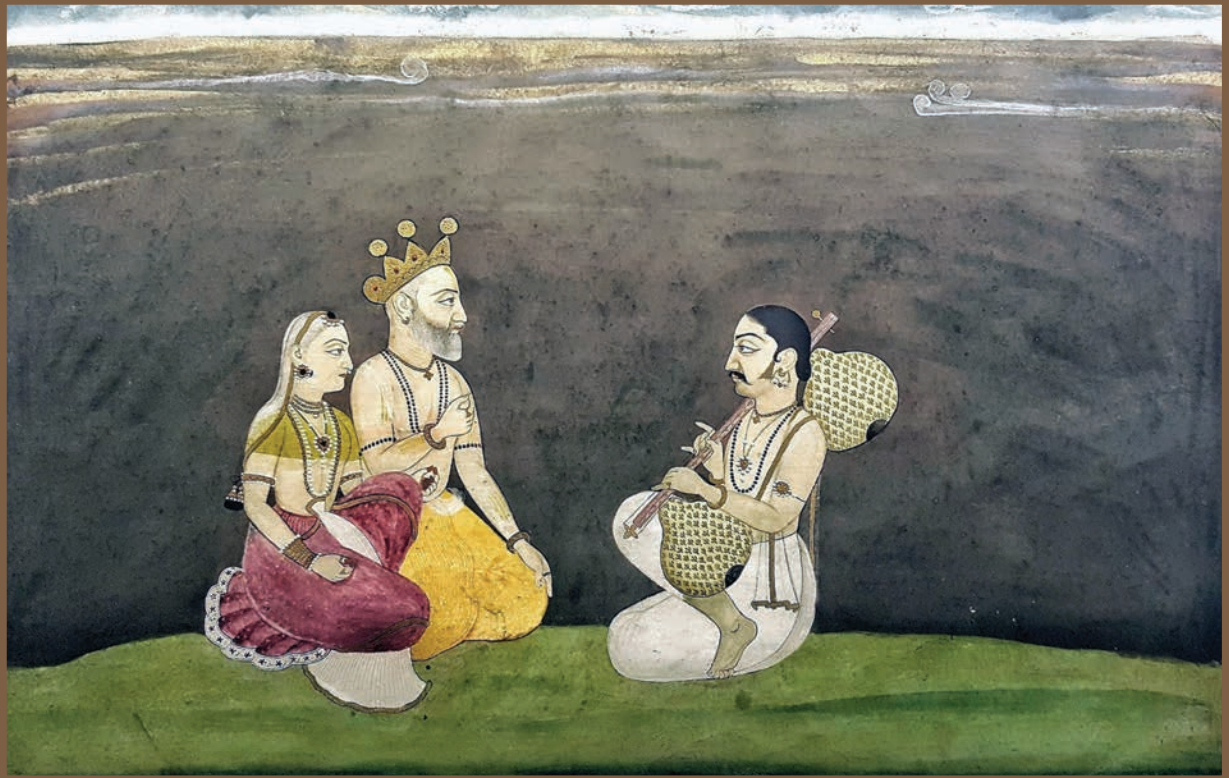
Jayadev was born during the reign of Maharaja Lakshman Sen of Bengal, in the eleventh or twelfth century of the Śaka era. His father was Bhojadev, and his mother was Vamadevi. For many years he lived in Nabadwip, then the capital of Bengal. His birthplace was in the Birbhum district, in the village Kendubilva. In the opinion of some authorities, however, he was born in Odisha, and still others say that he was born in southern India. He passed the last days of his life in Jagannath Puri. One of his famous books is *Gīta-govinda*, which is full of transcendental feelings of separation from Krishna. The *gopīs* felt separation from Krishna before the *rāsa* dance, as mentioned in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and the *Gīta-govinda* expresses such feelings. There are many commentaries on the *Gīta-govinda* by many *vaiṣṇavas*.

Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur comments in this connection that such feelings of separation



Unknown photographer.

Cover: Srila Jayadeva Goswami has darshan of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. Basholi style. *Gīta-govinda* series\_ Artist Manaku of Guler 1730.



*Jayadev Goswami and his mother Radha Devi and father Bhojadev*

as Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu enjoyed from the books of Vidyapati, Candidas and Jayadev are especially reserved for persons like Sri Ramananda Raya and Swarup Damodar, who were *paramahamsas*, men of the topmost perfection, because of their advanced spiritual consciousness. Such topics are not to be discussed by ordinary persons imitating the activities of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. For critical students of mundane poetry and literary men without God consciousness who are after bodily sense gratification, there is no need to read such a high standard of transcendental literature. Persons who are after sense gratification should not try to imitate *rāgānuga* devotional service. The songs of Candidas, Vidyapati and Jayadev describe the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Mundane reviewers of these songs simply help people in general become debauchees, and this leads only to social scandals and atheism in the world. One should not misunderstand the pastimes of Radha and Krishna to be the activities of a mundane young boy and girl. The mundane sexual activities of young boys and girls are most abominable.

Therefore, those who are in bodily consciousness and who desire sense gratification are forbidden to indulge in discussions of the transcendental pastimes of Sri Radha and Krishna. (Purport to Cc. ādi 13.42)

In the *Gīta-govinda* by Jayadev Goswami, one *gopī* tells her friend, “Krishna is the reservoir of all pleasure within this universe. His body is as soft as the lotus flower. And his free behavior with the *gopīs*, which appears exactly like a young boy’s attraction to a young girl, is a subject matter of transcendental conjugal love.” A pure devotee follows in the footsteps of the *gopīs* and worships the *gopīs* as follows: “Let me offer my respectful obeisances to all the young cowherd girls, whose bodily features are so attractive. Simply by their beautiful attractive features they are worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna.” Out of all the young *gopīs*, Srimati Radharani is the most prominent. (from Nectar of Devotion chapter 44) 🍌



Lord Varaha fights Hiranyaksha

rādhā-dāsyam

### THE SERVICE OF SRI RADHA



#### *Srīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

Sri Radhika is not specifically mentioned in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavat*. But in the description of the circular amorous dance, viz., the *rāsa* pastime, Sri Krishna is represented as leaving the circle of the dancing milkmaids in the company of a female who is more favored than all the rest. The milkmaids who were thus abruptly abandoned in the very midst of the dance praised the genuine devotion of the unnamed female who could induce Sri Krishna to prefer her sole company to the combined attractions of all the others.

But although the *Śrīmad Bhāgavat* mentions the above incident, the subject is not further developed in that work. This has been explained by the Goswamis of Vrindaban, apostles of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, as due to a deliberate resolve on the part of Sri Sukadev, who is the

narrator of the *Bhāgavata*, to avoid disclosing to his miscellaneous audience the “hidden matters” of the scriptures. The “hidden matters” can only be known by the special grace of Sri Krishna and not otherwise. They are not to be divulged to all persons indiscriminately.

This explanation offered by the Goswamis is not opposed to the open treatment of the same subject by Sri Jayadev and other writers. In spite of the *Gīta-govinda* and its companion works, the subject of the relationship of Sri Radhika to Sri Krishna remains shrouded in impenetrable mystery. No language can convey to the lay reader anything but a wholly misleading idea of the nature of the subject on which Sri Sukadev maintained such discrete silence. This result is hailed with unmistakable joy by Srīla Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami, author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Kaviraj Goswami pertinently observes that no joy can excel that of the narrator of the hidden subject when he realizes that those very persons are wholly and automatically barred from all knowledge of the subject who are sure not to



Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basholi style. Gita-govinda series. 1730

Sri Sri Radha Krishna unite in the forest of Vrindavan

appreciate the same for fear of whose neglect the writer is afraid to narrate fully.

Sri Sukadev's hesitation to divulge the secrets of the Vedas is well-founded. The conduct of Sri Jayadev Goswami in speaking out without reserve is equally in order if we remember that his book cannot be understood at all by those who are lacking in the highest spiritual culture.

Certain uncritical writers have not scrupled to throw mud even at the author of the *Gita-govinda*; but they are the exceptions. The generality of writers have thought it wise to avoid all reference to the subject for the honest enough reason that they have failed to understand how a book which has a most obscene exterior could be cherished by all the great devotees of the country whose conduct is universally admitted to have been free from any taint of causality. It is this paradox that has always exercised a salutary restraining influence on the saner sections of writers in regard to the treatment of this unintelligible subject. 🍌

— From *Prabhupada Sarasvati Thakura - The Life and Precepts*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

## RADHARANI'S WEALTH



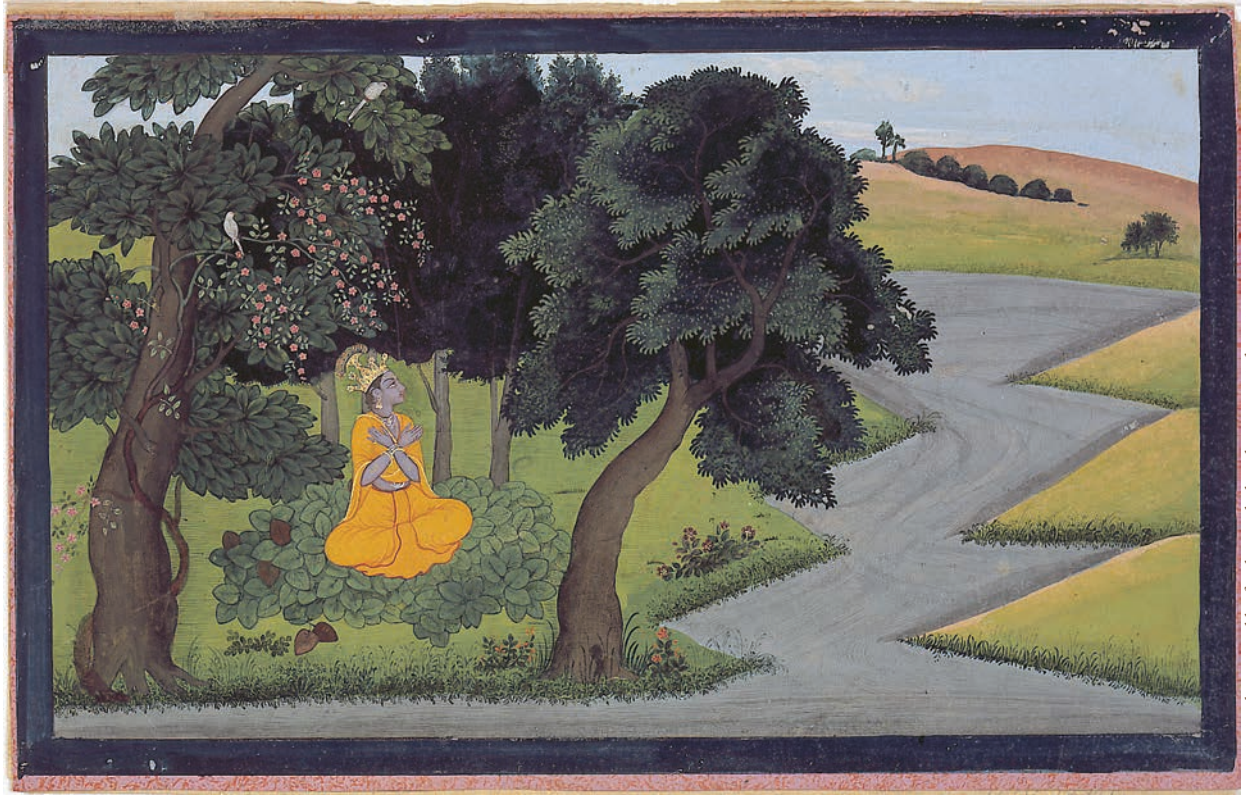
### Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmś tathaiva bhajāmy aham — “As one surrenders to me, I reciprocate accordingly.” This is Krishna's promise that he always pays back. He never incurs debt. He always pays back. Yet, in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.32.22 Krishna says, “I cannot pay back the love of the *gopīs*, the love of Radharani, because I have no wealth in my storehouse to pay it back. If there is no wealth, then what should be done? Beg, borrow or steal. So, where is that wealth from whom I shall beg, borrow or steal? It is only with Srimati Radharani. It cannot be found anywhere else. Radharani has this wealth, and it is stored in her heart. So, if I ask Radharani, ‘Please give,’ she'll never give me. If I ask, ‘Please lend it to me. I'll pay it back,’ still she'll never



Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basholi style, Gīta-govinda series, 1730

*Gīta-govinda speaks about the intimate pastimes of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna*



Painting by Nainsukh of Guler, Basholi style. Gita-govinda series. Late 1700s.

### Waiting for her

give me. So what shall I do? I must steal.” This is the last thing. “I must steal it.” He was thinking very deeply how to steal it.” It is stored in the core of the heart of Srimati Radharani, which is a very, very inaccessible place. “So how can I enter into there and steal it?” He was thinking like that. When he came as Krishna, he tried his best to get it, but he failed. He couldn’t get it. So, Jayadev Goswami has written:

*smara-garala-khaṇḍanam mama śirasi maṇḍanam  
dehi pada-pallavam udāram*

Krishna requested, “O Radharani! Will you kindly give your feet to me — *dehi pada-pallavam udāram*? Radharani has this wealth. Krishna thought, “Unless I please her how I can enter into her heart?” Krishna wants this. Therefore, he meditates on Radha. Everyone meditates on Krishna. But Krishna is meditating on Radha. He chants the name of Radha, but not publicly. He also serves Radharani, but only secretly so it is not known to the *gopīs*. 🍌

— From a talk in ISKCON Bhubaneswar, 20 April 1989.

## THE LEGACY OF JAYDEV GOSWAMI



Jayadev Goswami’s *Gīta-govinda* is a lyrical dance drama that has had a profound impact not only on the worship of Lord Jagannath in Puri but on the development of literature, art, and culture worldwide.

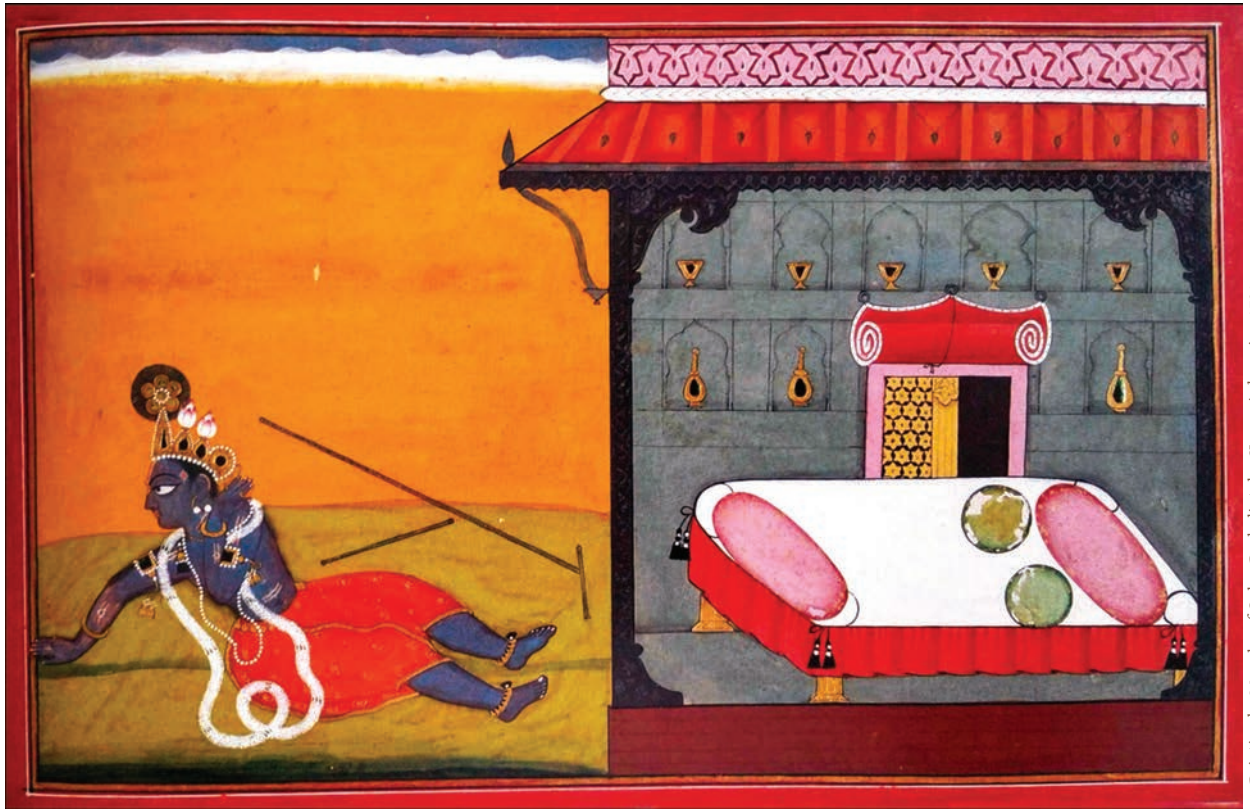
With its emotive literary ornaments, *Gīta-govinda* paints a picturesque canvas of divine landscapes, scenes and characters. Its captivating lyrics have inspired innumerable artists in the mediums of music, dance, literature, painting, sculpture, engraving, etc.

*Gīta-govinda* is comprised of twenty-four songs, presented in twelve acts. Every song is composed in a different classical *rāga* (melody) and *tāla* (rhythm), which reveals the author’s vast depth of knowledge in music theory, and the science of drama and mellows.

In the *Gauḍīya* tradition, Jayadev Goswami is regarded as the *ādi-pada-kartā*, the earliest composer of *vaiṣṇava* songs. The form and musical style of Jayadev’s composition became a model for recited *kāvya*s, narrative poems,



Krishna begs Radharani to give him her lotus feet



Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basholi style. Gita-govinda series, 1730

### Krishna feeling separation from Srimati Radharani

on the topic of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna. According to the Odia research scholar Gadadhar Mahapatra, between the 14th and 19th centuries about 132 literary works were printed following the theme, form, and musical style of Jayadev's poem. He also states that more than 1,500 unpublished manuscripts of various *kāvyas* that follow the mood and style of *Gīta-govinda* are still to be found with various collectors, libraries and museums in India and abroad. Some of the more famous poetic works that are clearly influenced by *Gīta-govinda* include Gajapati Purushottamdev's *Abhinava-gīta-govinda*; Srila Ramananda Ray's *Jagannāth-vallabha-nāṭakam*; and Dina Krishna Das' *Amṛta-sāgara*. Many scholars consider that the influence of Jayadev is also seen in the writings of both Chandidas and Vidyapati.<sup>1</sup> Chandidas' *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* incorporates a few padas of *Gīta-govinda*, and Vidyapati's *Vasanta-līlā* is said to echo some of the lyrics of Jayadev.

More than anywhere else, the influence of *Gīta-govinda* is seen in the poetry, drama, sculpture and dance of Odisha, the land of Lord Jagannath. In Odisha, literary works reflecting the characteristics of *Gīta-govinda* were written even before the time of Sri Chaitanya. Three decades of searching and counting

palm-leaf manuscripts in Odisha has found Jayadev's masterpiece to be second in circulation only to the Odia rendition of the *Bhāgavata* by Jagannath Das.<sup>2</sup>

In his purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, ādi 13.42, Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada mentions, "There are many commentaries on the *Gīta-govinda* by many *vaiṣṇavas*." To date, scholars have documented about forty commentaries, the earliest two of which are from Odisha. The following are some of the most prominent commentaries on *Gīta-govinda*:

- *Bhāvavibhāvinī-tīkā* by Udayan Acharya. This is the first known commentary on *Gīta-govinda*, it was written by a contemporary of Jayadev Goswami who hailed from the same Prachi valley in Odisha (compiled in the 1190's).
- *Sarvāṅga-sundarī* by Kaviraj Narayan Das. This is the second known commentary. The author was a court poet of the Puri king Narasimhadev I (reigned 1297-1307).
- *Sāra-dīpikā* by the great Maithili poet Jagaddhar (around 1320).
- *Rasika-priyā-tīkā* by Kumbhakarna Mahendra, the king of Mewar (early 14th century).
- *Dīpikā* by Gopal Acharya (unknown date).



*The gopīs advise Srimati Radharani*

- *Padadyotanikā* by Narayan Bhatta (unknown date).
- *Sañjīvanī* by Vanamali Bhatta, assumed by some to be in the line of Vallabhacharya (unknown date).
- *Rasa-mañjarī* by Maha-mahopadhyay Shankar Mishra (sometime in the 15th century).
- *Gīta-govinda ki tīkā* by Mira Bai, the famous poet and Rajasthani princess (early 16th century).
- *Bālabodhini-tīkā* by Chaitanya Das, a *Gauḍīya* commentator, also known as Sri Pujari Goswami (about 1600 AD).

Other persons who wrote on *Gīta-govinda* include Dharanidhara, who first translated the book into the Odia language. Scholars date his immensely popular work as being completed around the middle of the 16th century.<sup>3</sup> The Odia poet Dina Krishnadas wrote *Amṛta-sāgara*, sometime in the late 17th or early 18th century. Therein he explains through song the twenty-four padas of *Gīta-govinda*. Dina Krishnadas says that he wrote this explanation on the order of Lord Jagannath.

*Gīta-govinda* was first translated into Bengali by the poet Giridhar Das in 1736. This extraordinary literary work has been rendered into every regional language of South Asia, where it has been produced in about 180 editions. Aside from the Indian language translations, beginning from the 18th century, *Gīta-govinda* has been

translated and published in many languages including English, German, French, Latin, Dutch, and Hungarian.

And the above is only a partial list. Volumes of articles have been written simply describing the many commentators, translators, and writers influenced by Jayadev's immortal *Gīta-govinda*. 🍊 — Kkdd.

#### Notes

1 Vidyapati is sometimes called "Abhinava Jayadev", the new Jayadev.

2 See K. N. Mahapatra p. 419.

3 K. N. Mahapatra p. 419-420.

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Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basohli style, Gita-govinda series, 1730



*A confidante narrates to Srimati Radharani about Krishna's dalliances with the gopīs*

### **BASOHLI PAINTINGS AND THE ARTIST MANAKU**



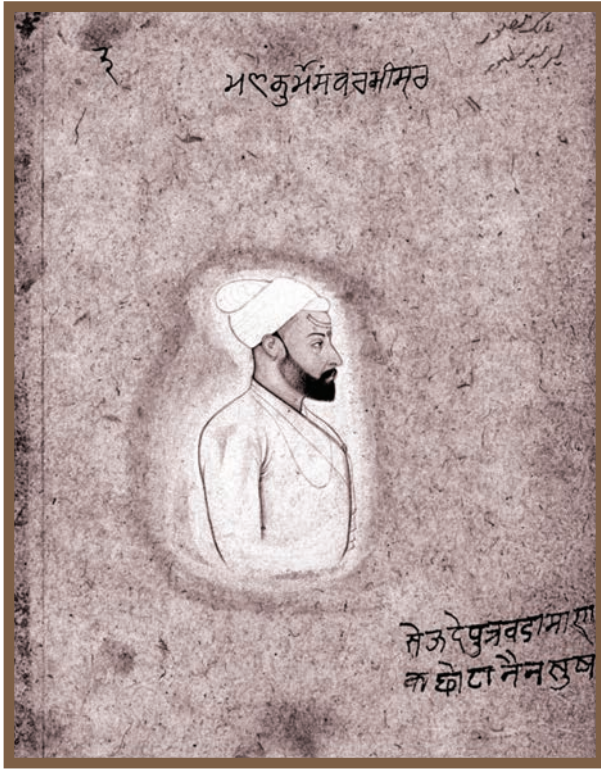
The paintings in this issue are mostly Pahari style from the sub-school known as Basohli by the artist Manaku of Guler (c. 1700–1760). Amongst Basohli artists, Manaku and his younger brother Nainsukh are two of the most prominent. The amateur historian Qazi Moien Ahmad has described Basohli art in his article, “Basohli Paintings History Features and Facts”:

Basohli, a town located in the Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, India, is renowned for its unique school of miniature paintings. Founded in the 16th century by Raja Bhupat Pal, Basohli has a rich artistic heritage, with its painting style, known as Basohli paintings, being considered the precursor to the Pahari painting schools. The Basohli paintings, celebrated for their striking and emotive colors, bold lines, and distinctive facial features, experienced their golden age during the 17th and 18th centuries.



Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basohli style, Gita-govinda series, 1730

*The Gīta-govinda narrates pastimes of the union and separation of Radha and Krishna*



*This portrait of the Basohli artist Manaku was made by his younger brother Nainsukha in the late 1700s*

Basohli paintings are distinguished by their vivid use of color, geometrical patterns, and a unique portrayal of figures. The colors are striking and rich, with ochre yellow, brown, and green dominating the palette. The figures in these paintings are notable for their stylized faces, elaborate costumes, and distinctive, large bulging eyes, giving them a unique individuality. Themes commonly depicted in Basohli paintings include portraits of local rulers, Hindu deities, narratives from Hindu mythology, and love stories like those of Radha-Krishna and Madhava-Malati, often drawn from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

Creating a Basohli painting is an intricate process, demanding exceptional skill and precision. Artists traditionally use Veale paper or ivory sheets as the canvas. The brushes are crafted from squirrel hair or Kalmunha bird feathers. The colors are derived from natural sources like dried leaves, flowers, beetle wings, and *khadiya* earth, contributing to the paintings' vivid and lustrous appearance. For embellishment, 24-carat gold and pure silver are used, highlighting the luxury and attention to detail in Basohli artwork. The finesse of these paintings is such that, with a magnifying glass, one can discern individual strands of hair on the subjects' heads.

Wikipedia has the following to say about Manaku of Guler:

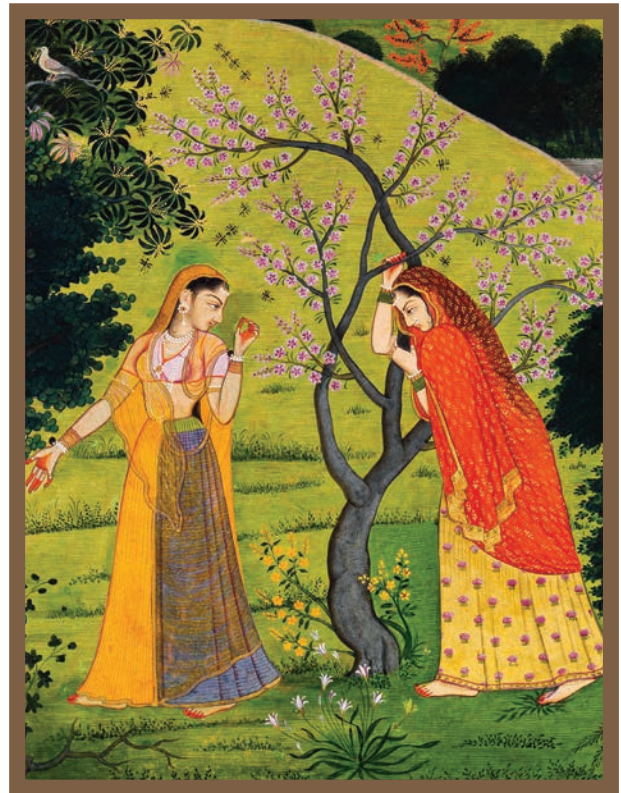
Manaku was an Indian painter from the Guler State in modern-day Himachal Pradesh. After his death he was mostly forgotten and overshadowed by his much-celebrated younger brother Nainsukh. But today he is recognized as an exponent of Pahari style of painting, much like his brother. The rediscovery of Manaku has been a result of research efforts by art historians like B. N. Goswamy. Like Nainsukh, Manaku almost never signed his works, and only four extant works carry his signature. 🍊

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**Basohli Paintings, History Features and Facts.** By Qazi Moien Ahmad:

[https://www.hamiast.com/blogs/stories/basholi-paintings-history-features-facts?srsId=AfmBOoq8Qngs1s8XWn\\_quE6Rt7iWoKpcZJO5a0WHOV4J5APpXDmW\\_4sw](https://www.hamiast.com/blogs/stories/basholi-paintings-history-features-facts?srsId=AfmBOoq8Qngs1s8XWn_quE6Rt7iWoKpcZJO5a0WHOV4J5APpXDmW_4sw)

**Manaku of Guler:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manaku\\_of\\_Guler#:~:text=Manaku%20of%20Guler%20or%20Manaku,painting%2C%20much%20like%20his%20brother.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manaku_of_Guler#:~:text=Manaku%20of%20Guler%20or%20Manaku,painting%2C%20much%20like%20his%20brother.)



*Radharani's intimate companion consoles her when Radha is feeling separation from Krishna*

## THE TOLERANCE AND COMPASSION OF JAYADEV GOSWAMI



### *Adapted from Priyadas' commentary On the Bhaktamālā of Nabha Goswami*

For information about Sri Nabha Das and his book *Bhaktamālā*, see *Bindu* issue 586.

One day a wealthy devotee invited Jayadev Goswami to his house. He wanted to give him some coins as a donation. Although Sri Jayadev refused to accept them, the wealthy man stealthily tied the coins in the corner of Jayadev's *cāḍara*. As Jayadev was returning to his ashram, he happened to meet some thieves.

Sri Jayadev asked, "Where are you going?"

The thieves replied, "We are going to the same place you are going."

From this Sri Jayadev understood that they were plunderers and so he untied the coins from his cloth

and gave them to the thieves, saying, "Kindly take as many of these as you want, and return the rest to me." The thieves thought, "This person is very clever. Out of fear he has given us everything without our even asking, but later on, when we arrive at a town, he will have us arrested." Thinking like this, the thieves kept some distance from Jayadev while continuing to walk.

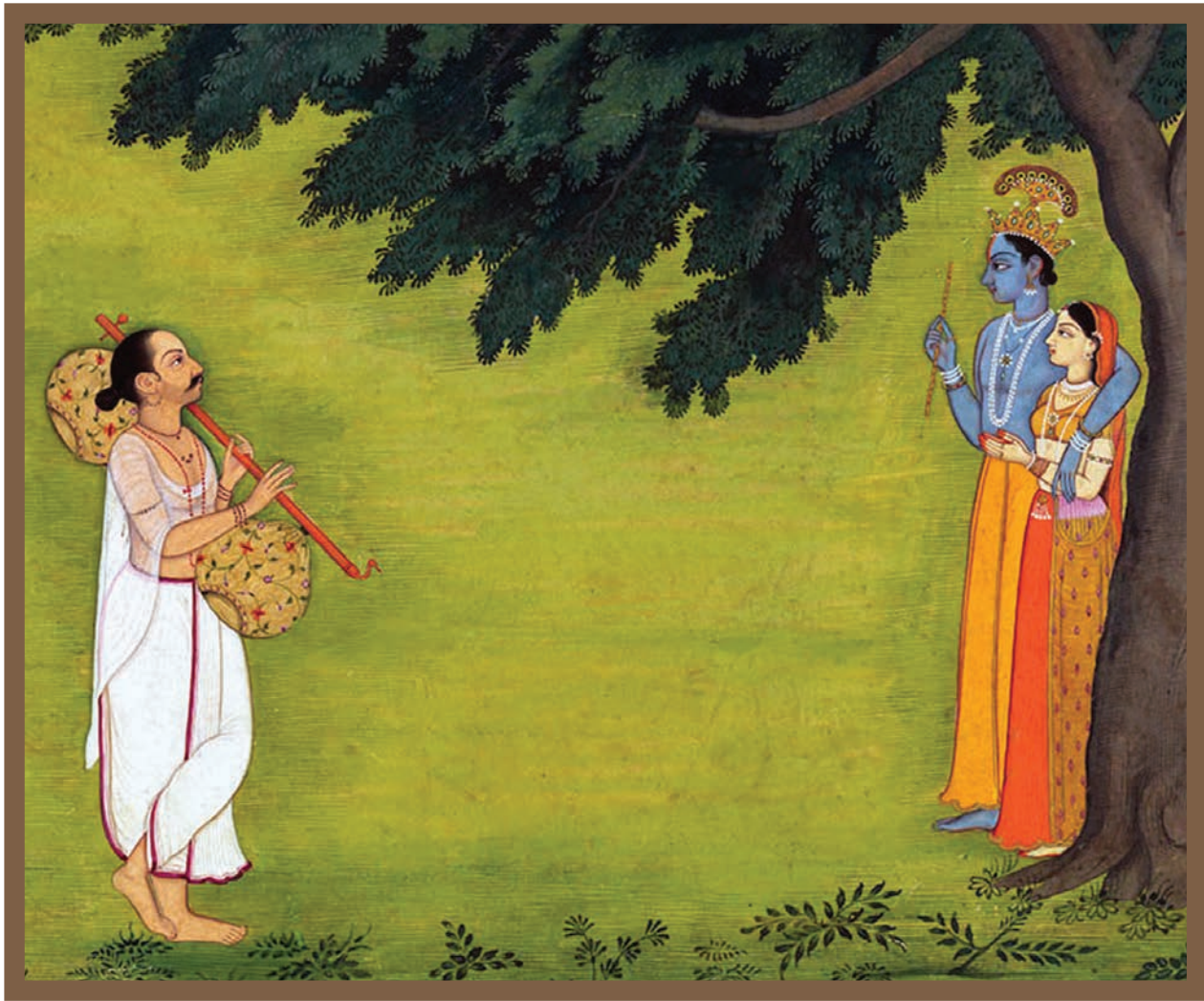
One of the thieves whispered to the others, "I think it is best if we kill him." Another said that since they had already gotten much wealth from him, there was no use in killing him. Another thief warned, "If later on he recognizes us and appeals to the king to punish us, what will we do?" Then the fourth thief gave his opinion, saying, "Do not kill him, and do not leave him. We should break his arms and legs and throw him in a ditch."

Everyone agreed with this idea and so they broke Jayadev's hands and legs and, after throwing him into a ditch, returned home. After a short while, the king (Lakshman Singh) passed by on that road. He saw a divine effulgence coming from the ditch, and then he found Sri Jayadev joyfully performing *saṅkīrtana* even though his hands and legs had been broken. The king pulled Jayadev out of the ditch and saw that he was



Painting by Manaku of Guler. Basholi style. Gita-govinda series. 1730

*Srila Jayadev Goswami worships Lord Vishnu*



*Srila Jayadev Goswami has darshan of Sri Sri Radha Krishna*

shining like another moon-god. When the king asked about the reason for his present condition, Sri Jayadev simply answered, “By destiny this has happened to me.”

Gradually, as the king viewed Sri Jayadev and heard his sweet words, he understood that this person was a great and powerful devotee. The king considered himself most fortunate to have met such an exalted personality and so he put Jayadev on a palanquin and brought him to his palace. With medical treatment, he cured his hands and legs. Then the king appealed to Jayadev, “I had a desire to have the association of a pure devotee, and now that desire has been fulfilled. Kindly order me. What service can I perform for you?”

Jayadev humbly replied, “O King, please arrange for a variety of sweets and other foodstuffs, offer them to the Supreme Lord, and respectfully distribute his *prasāda* to all the devotees. You should always be prepared to greet and serve the Lord’s devotees.”

Being thus ordered by Sri Jayadev, the king began serving the devotees in various ways, and his fame in this regard spread in all directions. One day the same thieves who had previously attacked Jayadev dressed as devotees, wearing neck beads and *tilaka* on their foreheads, and came to the king. Seeing them, Sri Jayadev happily exclaimed, “Look! Today my senior godbrothers have come!” He then proceeded to respectfully greet them. Sri Jayadev treated the thieves as devotees of the Lord, and in that mood informed the king, “These are great devotees, and their hearts are filled with love of God. Today you are fortunate because they have arrived at your house. Serve them with faith and devotion and be blessed.”

Receiving this order, the king took the thieves inside the palace and engaged his servants in serving them. Nice foodstuffs were prepared. Still, the minds of those four thieves were filled with anxiety because of their sinful lives. They were also afraid that Jayadev might



Painting by Manaku of Guler, Basholi style, Gita-govinda series, 1730

*During his japa, Srila Jayadev Goswami has a vision of Radha Krishna*

recognize them, for if he did, the king would surely kill them. Because of their anxiety, their mouths dried up. At last, they asked the king for permission to leave, but the king did not allow them to go. Finally, when they insisted on leaving, Sri Jayadev requested the king to give them sufficient wealth and let them depart. The king gave them varieties of clothing, jewels, and ornaments and let them depart. He also sent a few servants with the thieves so that they could carry their luggage and leave them at their ashram.

The king's guards took the thieves' luggage and began walking behind them. After a while, they stopped somewhere, and the royal guards sat on one side of the road while the thieves sat on the other. The guards asked the so-called devotees "My dear sirs, we have never seen devotees like you. Many saintly persons visit our king, but we have never seen the way our king has served you and the way Jayadev has respected you. Therefore, we humbly request you to tell us about your relationship with Swami Jayadev.

One of the so-called devotees replied, "This is very confidential. Still, I will reveal it to you, but do not disclose this to others. Previously, your Swamiji, along with us, worked for the king. Once he committed a serious offence and so the king ordered us to kill him.

But treating him as our friend, we did not kill him, but simply broke his hands and legs. Because we showed him this mercy, Swamiji respects us so much. We have received what we deserve for our good work."

After the ungrateful so-called devotees told this fabricated story, suddenly the earth split open and all of them fell into the crevice and vanished. Seeing this, the royal guards were highly astonished. They ran to Swami Jayadev and explained to him everything that had happened. When Sri Jayadev heard the story, his body began to tremble, out of unhappiness on hearing the thieves' fate. Thereafter, the royal guards approached their king and narrated both shocking incidents to him.

The king ran to Sri Jayadev and fell at his lotus feet. He said, "O lord, kindly reveal the confidential meaning of these two incidents. Why did the earth crack? Why did the saintly persons enter the crevice?"

When the king thus ardently requested Sri Jayadev to disclose the actual facts, he spoke as follows: "My dear King, no matter how people misbehave with saintly persons, sadhus never retaliate. On the contrary, they always try to do good even to their enemies. The devotees are always engaged in working for the welfare of all living entities.



Sri Krishna and the gopīs of Vrindavan

Their hearts are filled with compassion. They are sober, kind, and filled with devotional sentiments. As sinful people do not give up their sinful nature, so the devotees never give up their honesty and kindness. One who understands this most important fact receives the favor of saintly persons and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” 🍊

— Nabha Goswami with commentary by Priyadas. *Bhaktamāla*. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Edited by Purnaprajna Das. Rasbiharilal & Sons. Vrindaban. 2017.

### SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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### READER'S LETTERS TO BINDU

Thank you for the last Bindu [issue 588]. This statement struck me a lot:

“Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati became aroused and manifested his intrinsic nature as the lion *ācārya*: ‘Far from reciting the *Gītā* to Bhaktivinode Thakur, you were never able to see him. No mere professor can see Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur. In our conception, Bhaktivinode Thakur had no children. He was not a product of this material world.’”

Bhaktivinode Thakur keeps himself hidden from those who think they are seeing him. Bhaktivinode Thakur reveals himself to one who understands that he is to be seen by Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur. Thank you again. -- Haricandra Das, Czech.

### Write to us:

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**Letters may be edited for clarity and length.**

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